



## Supervised Agricultural Experience Fact Sheet

### Financing an SAE

Many SAE projects and programs, especially those that are entrepreneurial, require financial assistance. As with operating any business venture, students should be aware of resources available to assist with start-up costs, livestock purchases, new equipment, etc. A good idea or program should not be cut short because of lack of funding! Following are a few financial options:

#### **Agri-Entrepreneurship Award** ([www.ffa.org/programs/ag\\_ent/index.html](http://www.ffa.org/programs/ag_ent/index.html))

This award is available to all FFA members and chapters (one winner per chapter). Awards are based on the student's SAE business plan and application.

**How it works:** First, the chapter winner must find a local sponsor for \$25 or more (local FFA alumni groups are an excellent resource). Then, the student submits a matching funds voucher (available through the National FFA) with the sponsor information. The national program sponsor, USDA Rural Development, will then double that amount up to \$100. So if the local sponsor donates \$50, USDA will match it with \$100 for a total of \$150 toward the student's SAE. (It takes FFA approximately 10 days to process funds.) There is also a state award worth \$100 and 10 national agri-entrepreneurship winners recognized annually at the National FFA Convention, each receiving \$1,000 cash.

#### **SAE Merit/Akey/Triangle Grants** ([www.ffa.org/programs/sae](http://www.ffa.org/programs/sae))

These privately-funded grants are offered through the National FFA Organization. A student with a dairy, sheep or beef/cattle production SAE can apply for one of 16 Merit grants worth \$1,000 each. There are 20 Akey grants worth \$500 each awarded to students with swine production SAEs. In addition, approximately 16 grants worth \$150 each are available to students with agribusiness or farming SAEs from Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota or Wisconsin.

#### **Local Financial Institutions**

Many local or regional banks and agriculturally-related financial institutions offer loans for FFA projects. For example, Farm Credit Services offers financing programs for young, beginning and small farmers ([www.farmcredit.com](http://www.farmcredit.com)), and the Farm Credit Bank of Texas ([www.farmcreditbank.com](http://www.farmcreditbank.com)) offers low interest loans specifically for 4-H and FFA projects. The State Bank of Alcester in South Dakota, ([www.s-b-a.com](http://www.s-b-a.com)) and the Bank of Holden in Missouri ([www.bankofholden.com](http://www.bankofholden.com)) are two more examples of banks that finance FFA projects. Check with financial institutions in your local area to see what is available.

#### **Other Resources**

Other resources such as your state FFA foundation may have grants or funding available for individual or chapter SAE projects. For example, the Nevada FFA Foundation through the Nevada Department of Education was able to award school-based service-learning sub-grants to several chapters. One chapter grew native plants to restore a walking path, another chapter developed an animal science facility, and an inner-city program used funds to learn how to grow vegetables using hydroponics.